

## **ABSTRACT**

This qualitative research study examined four different instructional literacy strategies designed to meet the needs of struggling first graders. Participants were 20 first graders in an elementary school located in the outskirts of an urban community. Early assessments showed that three students had difficulty in the areas of letter identification, phonological awareness, phonics, and blending. These students were fairly lower than the rest of the students in the class. These students were observed during specially designed instruction given individually, in small groups, in centers, and through peer tutoring. The students were less frustrated and more motivated to learn literacy skills when involved in these methods. Time on task improved when students' instructional time was geared to their academic levels. When tested again later in the school year, all three struggling students had increased their knowledge of letter identification, phonological awareness, and phonics. Oral reading fluency, decoding, and blending also improved. The presence of these instructional strategies enhanced overall reading performance and helped narrow the academic gap between the struggling students and their classmates.